OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, DECEMBER 4, 1854.

To the President of the United States: SIR: In the annual report from the Navy Department, which I now have the honor to present, I have taken the liberty, in addition to the usual statement of the operations of the squadrons and the general condition of the service and the public property, to recommend a still further gradual increase of the navy, and to express frankly my views of the great importance of its reorganization and the enactment of new regulations for the discipline and improvement of seamen. If they are urged with seeming pertinacity, my only apology is a deep interest in the magnitude of the subject and a conviction of the necessity of legislative interposition.

The vessels composing the home squadron are the frigate Columbia, the flag-ship, Commander S. B. Wilson; the sloops-of-war Albany, Commander J. T. Gerry, Falmouth, Commander T. D. Shaw; and the steamers Prince ton, Commander Henry Esgle, and Fulton, Lieutenant Commanding J. K. Mitchell. Commodore J. T. Newton still commands this squadron. The cruising of the vessels of the squadron has been principally among the West India Islands and along the coasts bordering on the Ca-ribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico.

The Columbia returned to Norfolk, in obedience to orders from the Department, and on the 28th June sailed, under instructions to Commodore Newton, on special duty to St. Domingo. Having thoroughly surveyed the Bay of Samana and ascertained its depth and character, and examined the localities in its vicinity with reference to fitness for a convenient depot for naval purposes, the Columbia returned to Pensacola, and is now under orders to proceed to San Juan de Nicaragua, conveying to that point Mr. Wheeler, United States Minister resident to Nicaragua, and Mr. Marlin, United States Minister resident to Guatemala. The Princeton, Commander Eagle, sailed from Norfolk on the 31st of October for Pensacola and will proceed on her cruise as a part of the home squadron. The Albany, Commander Gerry, in pursuance of the orders of the Commodore, has been actively cruising during the entire year, having visited, among other ports, those of Samana, Sisal, St. Thomas, La Guira, Curacoa, Carthagena, Aspinwall, San Juan, Port Royal, and St. Jago de Cuba. She has done good service, and Com mander Gerry and his officers merit the approbation of the Department, as I have reason to know that the ap pearance of our flag at those ports and the bearing of the officers contributed much to the encouragement and protection of our citizens engaged in commercial transac-tions in those regions.

The last official intelligence received from the Albany was on the 28th of September from Aspinwall, informing the Department that on the ensuing day she would sail for New York. There is no doubt of her having put to sea at the time mentioned. Much time having elapsed and no tidings of her having been received, it is but natural that painful anxiety should be felt touching her fate. The prevalent opinion is that she has sustained serious injuries from encountering storms recently prevalent in her course homeward, and that she has put into some port for repairs. With a view of obtaining information and affording relief, the steamer Princeton left Pensacolasome days ago in search of the Albany. The Department still entertains the opinion that she is safe.

The Fulton, which until the 24th of April was under the command of Lieut. James M. Watson, was in useful service, and, having visited many of the ports of the West Indies, returned to the United States. On the 17th May she left Norfolk under the command of Lieut. Mitchell, conveying to the port of Vera Cruz the Hon. Mr. Gadsder our Minister to Mexico, and bearer of the treaty recently concluded between the United States and Mexico, where she remained until the treaty was ratified, and with it re-turned to the port of Washington, where she has since been necessarily detained, and is now ready for service.

The practicability of inter-oceanic communication by the construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Darien, between Caledonia bay and the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of San Miguel, on the Pacific, has long been a subject of much speculation and controversy among men of science and learning. The magnitude of the work and wonderful influence which its successful accomplishment might exert upon the commerce of the world, and more especially upon the intercourse between our Atlantic and Pacific possessions, induced the Department, with your approbation, to accept the services of an accomplished and enterprising officer of the navy, Lieut. I. G. Strain, who volunteered to undertake the exploration. The Caribbean Sea being embraced within the limits assigned as a cruising ground for the Home Squadren, the Department concluded that the Cyane, Commander Hollins, might, with great propriety, cruise in that region, take proper soundings at Caledonia Bay, and at the same time, with but little additional expense, convey any party that might volunteer to engage in the arduous and interesting exploration. Passed Midshipman Truxten, First Assistant Engineer J. M. Maury, Midshipman H. M. Garland, and a few civilians and seamen from the crew of the Cvane also volunteered to embark in the adventure. The permission of the New Grenadian Government having on cheerfully given, the Cyane sailed from Philadelphia in December last, and arrived at Porto Escoces, on Caledonia Bay, on the 17th of January. The party were landed, and proceeded to execute the special duty assigned. They succeeded in crossing the 1sthmus and returning, after encountering sufferings and hardships, and exhibiting powers of endurance, a spirit of enterprise, and a us devotion to duty eminently creditable to them as officers and honorable to them as men. A few of the seamen and civilians were unable to bear up under their trying exposure, and expired. The Cyane returned with the party to New York. I refer you, however, for a more particular recital of the details of the expedition, to the interesting report of Lieut. Strain, which accompanies ation, from which you will perceive that he is very decidedly of opinion that the work is totally impracticable, and thus, I apprehend, settles the question

It is proper that I should remark that the officers of her Britannic Majesty's ship Virago, on the Pacific, were prompt and generous in extending timely relief to the suffering party, and that a proper appreciation of it has been officially communicated to her Britannic Majesty's Government.

forever.

Intelligence having been received that the property of citizens had been improperly detained by the people of San Juan de Nicaragua; that our Minister to Central America, Hon. Mr. Borland, had been treated with rudeness and disrespect; and that the interests of our countrymen required the immediate presence of a man-of-war in that neighborhood, the Cyane, being the most available vessel for that purpose, in obedience to instructions from the Department, put to sea again on the 19th of June.

On her arrival at San Juan Commander Hollins, learn ing from Mr. Fabens, the United States Commercial Agent at that place, that the demand made by him, by order of the State Department, for a proper reparation of wrongs committed by them, had been treated with derision and contempt, after due deliberation thought it exough Mr. Fabens, to make a final demand upon the inhabitants for a satisfactory adjustment. As the result was entirely unsatisfactory, Commander Hol-lins gave notice on the 12th of July, by a proclamation posted in the most public places, that if the proposed terms of settlement were not complied with he should, at 9 A. M. of the 13th, proceed to bombard the town of San t " the rights of our country and citisens may be vindicated, and as a guaranty for future pro-tection." He had hoped that the show of a determina-tion on his part would, at this stage of the proceedings, tion on his part would, at this stage of the proceedings have brought about a satisfactory adjustment. Such, however, was not the case. His appeals for adjustment were disregarded; his proclamation was only read to be treated with contempt. His return to his country after all this without inflicting some punishment upon these lawless and reckless people he thought would be but a signal for a renewal of insults and outrages. Having His return to his country after dered boats for the removal of property to all who would avail themselves of them, he bombarded the place and destroyed most of their property, without

I could not reprove this commander for his conduct Humanity often lends her sympathies to the sufferer, however just the punishment, but patriotism rarely con demns the brave officer who administers that punishmen from a sense of justice to his countrymen whose property is destroyed and whose national flag is insulted. We well regret the stern necessity which constrained him but it should be remembered that Commander Hollins had been compelled but a year before to interfere and stop these same people in their progress of destruction of American property; that he had besides seen the report of our Minister speaking of them as "being persons, al-most without exception, of notoriously bad character— some of them discharged penitentiary convicts and refugees from justice, habitually manifesting evil dispositions towards our citizens, and indulging those dispositions to the injury of persons and property whenever they are not restrained by force;" and that he was "unable to regard them in any other light than as pirates and out-laws;" that he knew that this ungoverned populace had for a season restrained an American Minister's personal liberty and rudely assailed him; that they had retained and refused to surrender the stolen property of some of our countrymen; that they contemptuously turned a deaf ear to his appeals for adjustment; and that his alterna-tive was to inflict punishment or return to his country

with a well-armed national vessel and report that he had demanded satisfaction, and, upon being treated with con-tempt, had felt it his duty to come home.

Rash impetuosity on the part of those who hold in their hands, to some extent, the clements of war cannot be too strongly discountenanced. No officer should dare trifle with them. But I think that an acquaintance with all the facts and calm reflection will relieve our own people (who are justly sensitive of national honor) from any fear that a wrong has been perpetrated, and a refe-

rence to history may well silence the criticism of others. The Cyane requiring extensive repairs, and owing to the condition of the crew from the unhealthiness of that climate and their previous exposure in the bay of Caledonia, her return to the United States became necessary After receiving on board the archives of the Commercial Agency and Mr. Fabons and his effects, Commander Hollins proceeded to Boston, and the vessel on the 1st of September was put out of commission for the purpose of

repairs, which are now completed.

The Falmouth, Commander Shaw, has been very recently put in commission, and will proceed to sea in a

The Brazil squadron, Commodore W. D. Salter, has attached to it the flag-ship Savannah, Commander Samuel Mercer; the sloop-of-war Germantown, Commander W. F. Lynch; the brig Bainbridge, Lieut. Commanding C. G. Hunter; and the store-ship Relief, Lieut. Commanding S. C. Rowan. The store-ship Relief returned to New York on the 29th of July for fresh supplies, and having taken in her cargo sailed for Rio on the 24th of September The sloop-of-war Jamestown, which at my last report formed one of this squadron, having completed her cruise. returned to the United States and arrived at Philadelphia on the 2d of May.

The steamer Water Witch, Lieut. Commanding T. J. Page, is still actively engaged in the surveys of the rivers Uruguay and Parana.

This squadron is efficiently engaged in taking care of the interests of our country in that region, with which our commercial transactions are rapidly growing.

The African Squadrou, Commodore Isaac Mayo, sists of his flag-ship, the frigate Constitution, Commander J. Rudd; the sloops-of-war Marion, Commander H. Y. Purviance, and Dale, Commander Wm. C. Whittle. The brig Perry, Lieut R. L. Page, after having been on the station two years, arrived at Norfolk on the 15th of July. The Constitution and the Marion will be relieved early in the ensuing year, at which time they will have been two years on that station.

The vessels of this squadron have been actively, and in many instances successfully, engaged in checking the slave trade, and some of them have been regularly cruising on the coasts most frequented by slavers. The offi-cers in command have also had it in their power to render assistance to merchant vessels in distress and to our growing commerce, exposed to many dangers on the African

The Mediterranean Squadron, Commodore S. H. String ham, consists of his flag-ship, the frigate Cumberland, Commander A. A. Harwood; the steam-frigate Saranac, Captain J. C. Long; the sloops-of-war St. Louis, Commander D. N. Ingraham, and Levant, Commander C. C. Turner. The Cumberland will be relieved early in the spring, and authority has been given for the return of the Levant and St. Louis early in the ensuing year.

This squadron, during the past year, has visited many of the ports of Italy, Sicily, the Archipelage, and Greece, and also the coasts of Spain and Barbary; and has kept a watchful eye over American interests in the Mediterrancan.

The Saranac, under instructions from the Department, conveyed Mr. Chandler, the United States Consul-General to Tunis, frem Marseilles to Tunis, where he was landed on the 13th of July with the usual honors.

The East India Squadron consists of the sloop-of-war Macedonian, Capt. Joel Abbot, the senior officer on the station; the steam-frigate Powhatan, Capt. W. J. Mc-Cluney; and the sloop of war Vandalia, Commander John Pope. The steam frigates Mississippi and Susquehanna, the sloop-of-war Plymouth, and the store-ships Southampton, Supply, and Lexington are now on their way home—the steamers returning by the way of San Francisco. Commodore M. C. Perry, recently commanding this squadron, is, by permission of the Department, re-turning to the United States by the way of England. The vessels of the squadron, owing to the civil war ex-

sting in China, have had frequent calls made upon them for the protection of American citizens and property, and have been of great service to our countrymen in that re

mote region. Commodore Perry, with the steam-frigate Powhatan as his flag-ship, Capt. W. J. McCluney; the sloop-of-war Macedonian, Capt. J. Abbot; the steam-frigates Susquehanna, Commander F. Buchanan, and Mississippi, Com-mander S. S. Lee; the sloop-of-war Vandalia, Comman-der John Pope; and the store-ships Southampton, Lieut. Com. J. J. Boyle, and Lexington, Lieut. Com. J. J. Glasson, arrived at Yedo bay, Japan, on the 13th of February, for the purpose of fulfilling the plans of which he had notified them the year before, and of endeavoring to establish commercial relations between Japan and the United States. By indomitable perseverance and remarkable management he succeeded finally in overcoming the obstinacy and prejudices of the Japanese Government, and induced it to enter into a treaty of amity and peace, by which two of its ports, Hakodade and Simoda, were opened to vessels, and shipwrecked mariners of American vessels are guarantied to have ample protection and kind treatment on whatever part of the coasts they may be ast. The above mentioned ports were fully surveyed by our vessels, and are represented to be very convenient and commodious. Presents were also exchanged between

The treaty having been concluded, it was entrusted to ommander H. A. Adams, who was directed to proceed in the Saratoga, Commander W. S. Walker, to San Fran cisco, and thence to Washington. On the arrival of the Saratoga at the Sandwich Islands, a more speedy conveyance offering, Commander Adams left her and reached Washington with the treaty on the 10th of July. modore Perry and those who accompanied him in his novel and perilous undertaking deserve well of their country. A new era seems, through their instrumentality, to be dawning upon the commerce of the world. It is difficult to calculate the wonderful results which present and future generations may experience from this promised gradual dropping off of the cruel fetters with which ignorance has so long embarrassed commerce, and this hopeful prospect of the spread of civilization and liberty and good gov-

the Japanese Government and the United States.

ernment, so cheering to the Christian statesman The Saratogs proceeded on her way to the United States, and arrived at Boston September 1st, having been absent from the country for four years. I have expressed to Commander Walker and his officers, as also to the crew, my just appreciation of their good conduct, not-withstanding the expiration of their terms of enlistment. I regret to state that, whilst the Plymouth was engaged in surveying the Bonin islands, Lieutenant John Matthews, with thirteen of the crew, when in a boat, encountered a severe typhoon and were all lost. Lieutenant Matthews had a high reputation in the navy as an officer,

and the men are represented to have been among the best

of the crew. The vessels of the expedition for the survey and reconnoissance of Behring Straits, the North Pacific ocean, and China seas, after leaving Simon's bay, Cape of Good Hope, proceeded to Hong Kong, China; the sloop-of-war ncennes, Commander C. Ringgold, and the brig Por poise, Lieutenant Commanding A. B. Davis, by the way of Van Dieman's Land, through the Coral seas, passing the Caroline and Ladrone and Bashee islands, arriving at Hong Kong on the 17th of Msrch; the steamer John Hancock, Lieutenant Commanding John Rodgers, the store ship John P. Kennedy, Lieutenant Commanding N. and the tender Fennimore Cooper, Lieutenan Commanding H. K. Stevens, by the way of the Straits of Sunda and Gaspar, the Carimata and Billeton passages. and the Sooloo sea. Their arrival at Hong Kong is re

civil war raging in China, and particularly in the vicinity of Canton, so alarmed American citizens holding immense property in that region that Commander Ringgold considered it proper to suspend temporarily the special duties to which he was assigned and render pro his exposed countrymen, and has thus failed to accomplish a large portion of the surveys that had been planned for the present year. In addition to these embarrass. ments, Commodore Perry informs the Department, unde date of August 9, that on his arrival at Hong Kong he found the expedition laboring under serious disadvantages, owing to the unfortunate affliction of Commande inggold, which has rendered it necessary, in the opinion of the medical officers, that he should return to the Unit-ed States. Commodore Perry having placed in charge of the expedition an experienced officer, Lieutenant John Rodgers, the next in rank, and the plan of operations marked out by him being considered judicious, the De

partment has directed him to proceed with all dispatch its execution. The Pacific Squadron, Commodore B. Dulany, consists f the flag-ship St. Lawrence, Commander W. W. Hunter, the sloops-of-war Portsmouth, Commander T. A. Dornin, and St. Mary's, Commander T. Bailey. frigate Independence, Capt. J. Tattnall, bearing the broad pendant of Commodore W. Mervine, sailed from New York on the 9th of October for the Pacific. Upon her arrival out Commodore Mervine will take command and Commodore Dulany will return to the United States in the St. Lawrence. The sloop of war Decatur, Commander I. S. Sterett, and the steamer Massachusetts, Lieut. Commanding R. W. Meade, sailed from Norfolk, re-spectively, the 16th of June and 5th of July, to join this squadron. By last advices they had reached and left Rio on their way out; but the Massachusetts, after a day's sail, encountered and suffered seriously from a lent storm, and returned to Rio for repairs.

The St. Lawrence has been cruising most of the year between the ports of Payta and Callao, in Peru, and Valparaiso, in Chili. The Portsmouth returned from the Sandwich Islands to San Francisco on the 14th of January. The Government having received sufficient intelligence to impress it with the apprehension that an unlawful expedition had left or was about leaving San Francisco for the nurposa of taking possession of territory. co for the purpose of taking possession of territory belonging to Mexico, instructions were sent Commander Dorain to render prompt and efficient aid in assisting to arrest and suppress any such unlawful expedition as might be set on foot within the jurisdiction of the United States, and to exercise all lawful means of preventing the violation of law and infraction of treaty stipulations. To assist him in this he was, with your approbation, author-ized, if necessary, to charter a steamer for a short time on reasonable terms. Commander Dornin considered it necessary, and for this purpose he chartered, at San Francisco, the steamer Columbus, belonging to the Paci-fic Mail Steamship Company. With this steamer and the Portsmouth he proceeded along the coast; and having evinced a determination to execute his orders, and unite with the civil authorities in promptly arresting and suppressing all unlawful expeditions, he unquestionably con ributed largely to their early termination, and thus to the maintenance of friendly relations with a neighboring Power. Some of the leaders were arrested, and many of the sick and wounded availed themselves of the offer of Commander Dornin to return them to their homes.

After he had terminated successfully his efforts in regard to the unlawful expedition against Mexico, he re-ceived intelligence that about twenty American citizens were imprisoned in close confinement at Mazatlan. Hav-ing investigated the matter, and concluding that their confinement was improper, he interfered and demanded their release. They were soon discharged by order of the Government of Mexico, and, at the instance of Commander Dornin, were conveyed in the revenue outter "W. L. Marcy" to San Francisco at their own request. The Portsmouth did good service at Acapulco in relieving American steamers from the embarrassment of a blockade of that port. When last heard from she was at the Sandwich Islands, and is now probably on her way to the United States under the order of the Departmen The St. Mary's, which left the United States on the 15th of October, 1853, joined the squadron at Valparaiso on the 20th of January. Complaints having been made of abusive conduct towards our shipmasters whose business carried them to the Chincha Islands, the St. Mary's was sent there in April. Commander Bailey found in port about one hundred and sixteen sail of vessels, twohirds of which were American. The presence of the St. Mary's had a very beneficial effect, and the masters of the large fleet of merchantmen, both English and American, expressed themselves highly gratified at the prompt and energetic action taken by Commander Bailey in re-gard to their complaints and grievances. Whilst there he had an opportunity to return the protection which was afforded last year by Admiral Moseby, of the English navy, to many of our countrymen, by affording assistance and protection to Capt. McClenan, master of the English Kildaire, which assistance and protection had been refused by the Peruvian Governor of the islands. The St. Mary's, after cruising on the coast south of Panama and showing our flag at Iqique, (Arica,) and various other ports, was on the 29th of August (the last advices from her) at the Sandwich Islands, whither she had been

sent by Commodore Dulany, under instructions from the The steamer Michigan, Commander J. S. Nicholas, is still in commission on our northern lakes, and during the

last season engaged in her usual cruising. The steam frigate San Jacinto, Capt. Stribling, having received on board the new machinery recently constructed for her, put to sea on the 9th of August for a six months' cruise, with a view especially to testing the capacity of the machinery, in pursuance of the terms of the contract. When last heard from she was at Southampton, and, having undergone very slight repairs, was about proceeding

In addition to the employment of the vessels, officers, and men afloat, as thus recited, many of the officers and men of the navy are assigned to duty on the coast survey.

INCREASE OF THE NAVY.

Although Congress, at its last session, promptly reconded to the recommendation for the construction of ix new steam-frigates and for completing and launching the frigates Santee and Sabine, I am very far from en-tertaining the opinion that the enlargement of the navy should stop here. The protection of our wide-spread commerce, the guarding of our extended coast, the preservation of our rank as a nation, demand that we should not be entirely stationary, and with inactive indifference behold the progress of other Powers in naval strength. And it is hardly unwise to glance at the various national Navy Registers and compare the size of our navy, not merely with that of the mighty nations with whom we claim equal rank, but with that of other nations whom we esteem to e far, far behind us in the race of national greatness. Even with the addition of the unfinished six steam-frigates, our naal force will not exceed fifty vessels in condition Weakness invites aggression, and never inspires respect; while acknowledged strength and visible preparation command consideration, and are the true safeguards of peace, and no warlike mestrom age or affliction. There are also many good officers

ed honor upon himself and his country; have brought or affliction. There are also many good officers sengers of propagandism are to be sent forth to force re-publican liberty upon reluctant victims of misgovernment, it may be well to remember that, in addition to the ordinary uncertainty which ever hangs around questions of peace and war in the distant future, we have to encounter ill-disguised jealousy of our peculiar institutions from those who cling with tenacity to the old system of Government. Hear the language of one of your predecessors in a message to Congress more than a quarter of a century ago:

"Unprovoked injuries are often inflicted, and even the pe-culiar felicity of our situation might with some be a cause for excitement and aggression. The history of the late wars in Europe furnishes a complete demonstration that no system of conduct, however correct in principle, can protect neutral Powers from injury from any party; that a defenceless posi-tion and a distinguished love of peace are the surest invita-tions to war; and that there is no way to avoid it other than by being always prepared and willing for a just cause to meet it. If there be a people on earth whose more especial duty it is to be at all times prepared to defend the rights with which they are blessed, and to surpass all others in sustain-ing the necessary burdens and in submitting to sacrifices to make such preparations, it is undoubtedly the people of these States.'

The well-armed and well-manned ships of our navy may be truly regarded as so many ocean sentinels stationed along the the main to challenge at once any who might dare to seek an assault upon institutions sacred to us, but inconvenient to them. It is true we are at peace with the world; and so but a few months ago were the nations of Europe, and, under the benign influence of christianity and civilization, seemed hopeful of a quiet future, with no rivalry but in arts, science, and national levelopment. The scene is suddenly changed. War, with all its bloody calamities, is convulsing those mighty nations, and no prophetic statesman can foretell its extent or its termination. But who are interested in the navy? It is not merely the citizen whose lot is cast along the coast, the wealthy merchant in our cities, the speculator in floating merchandise, but merchants, mechanics, planters, our countrymen all along the coast, up our rivers, beyond the mountains. The agricultural interest is as much benefited and protected by the navy as any other. Every planter in every section is not more truly protected by the enclosure around his farm than by our "wooden walls" which float around our coast. The States which border on the Mississippi transport on its bosom their cotton, and grain, and sugar, and vast varie-ties of products, which are borne into the Gulf of Mexi-

With no navy sufficient to protect it in that region, who can appreciate the inconvenience and embarrassment which our planting interest will experience in war? But the great cost is often suggested. That should always be vigilantly watched by the prudent statesman, who should, however, remember that every dollar is expended among our own people in the purchase of material and payment of laborers; and that it brings into exercise the mechanical skill of our country, promotes, and thereby perpetuates, a class in our midst essential to our national independence. He who visits our navy yards, and lingers a moment in beholding the giant frames of the noble ships now being constructed by the genius, the labor, and with the material of our own country, will find that the money expended not merely results in presenting a floating battery to protect our property and our flag, but gladdens the hearts of hundreds of cheerful artizans, who pay it back into the Treasury with fourfold interest. It is not wasted capital; it is not like the millions annually sent abroad to foreign capitalists to pay the debts contracted for schemes of extravagance, leaving embarrassment in its trail. Ido not propose to increase the number of officers, nor materially to enlarge the squadrons, and thereby increase largely our current expenses, nor to have a navy orease largely our current expenses, nor to have a navy of the immense size and expense of some of the Powers of Europe; but I do propose so to increase the material of our navy as at least to approximate to a state of readiness for emergencies which wise statesmen strive to avoid, but wiser statesmen prepare to meet. It will be my pleasure to coperate with the legislative department of Government in practically carrying out these views.

For a detailed statement of the actual condition of our naval force I beg to refer you to the full report of the

naval force I beg to refer you to the full report of the chief of the Bureau of Construction, Equipment, and Repair.
In the exercise of the discretion imposed upon me by

sheltered comfortably and able to prosecute the work in the most inclement weather.

On examination I discovered that there was neither material, building-slip, nor ship-house at Pensacola, and that the Franklin was being rebuilt, and the Santee al-tered and completed at Kittery. I therefore ordered that immediate preparation be made for constructing the new frigates at the navy yards in Boston, Brooklyn, Philanew frigates at the navy yards in Boston, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Washington, and Norfolk. There is no difficulty in securing the services of as many skilful mechanics and laborers as are desired. The public officers at the several yards have all manifested a deep interest in dispatching the work with success. Much progress has been made, and I have no doubt six first-class steamers, equal to the expectation of the country, will be completed as speedily as men and means can accomplish the work. Not having facilities for manufacturing the steam machinery necessary, except at the Washington navy yard, I had no alternative but to make contracts with private establishments for five of the frigates. These contracts stablishments for five of the frigates. These contracts have been made with builders of established reputation, and the contractors are busily engaged in fulfilling them. The plan adopted was to invite proposals, so as to call forth the best skill of the country, and, before adopting them, submit them for my guidance to a board of engineers. Bonds with approved suretles have been taken for the fitted. for the faithful execution of the work, and two-fifths of the contract price is to be retained until the machinery has worked successfully and satisfactorily at sea for six machinery to men-of-war, to order Engineer-in-Chief Martin to visit Europe with a view to availing himself of any improvements which may have been made. The ob-servations made during his visit and the interesting reports of Lieut. Walker, who had been similarly engaged, will prove useful to the service. The Santee and Sabine frigates will be completed and ready for being launched in a few weeks. The Franklin is progressing rapidly, and it is confidently expected that the six steam-frigates will be launched certainly by the ensuing fall, if not

REORGANIZATION OF THE NAVY.

In my last annual report I ventured to express the opinion "that the present organization of the navy is not only essentially defective and unwise, but is, in its practical operation, working palpable and serious mis-chief to the efficiency and character of that branch of the public service," and "that a retired list on reduced pay for the faithful who have become infirm; the discharge of the inefficient who have no claim on the bounty of their ment for services rendered; promotion regulated by capacity, merit, and not by mere seniority of commission; and pay to some extent controlled by sea service, are reforms not only demanded by the condition of the service, by considera-tions of justice, but absolutely necessary to the preserva-tion of efficiency and usefulness." Efforts were made during the last session to accomplish many of the desired re-forms; no final action was taken. Subsequent reflection and experience of nearly two years' connexion with the navy, an extended acquaintance with the officers and an atten tive observation of the practial working of the present system, had not only confirmed me in the correctness of those views, but constrain me, at the hazard of the charge of pertinacity, to renew most earnestly my previous re-commendations, and to urge their consideration and adoption with deep solicitude. So far as I have the authority at present, these views shall guide my action. I cannot recommend for promotion to higher rank and larger pay officers who do not merit it from incapacity, either or physical. I do not appreciate the justice or pelicy of promoting to a higher grade an officer who cannot perform its duties, unless in rare exceptional cases, as a compli-mentary reward for services rendered. It is neither more nor less than elevating the incompetent, and then ordering the unpromoted competent to do their work. Is there an alarm of fastening upon the Government an odious pension system? None can cherish a greater repugnance to that than myself; but none can be more fully con-vinced that it can be so well surrounded with safeguards, restrictions, and limitations as to retain its virtues and

Is the particular plan of having the aid of a board of officers in ascertaining the incompetent and unworthy objected to? I am not wedded to that or any other scheme, provided the main object can be attained. I should be content to have the Secretary from time to time officially report to the President such names as he wishes retired or dropped; that the President should should b transmit, if he thinks proper, their names to the Senate, with a recommendation suited to each case. Thus the President and the Senate, the appointing power, will be the removing power, and the apprehension of Star Chamber persecution and being victimized by secret inquisition, now felt by some worthy officers, would be quieted. But I forbear to fatigue with details. The magic touch of reform is needed, and if skilfully applied will impart to the now drooping body of our navy a robust health and a new life. I believe that sound policy, stern justice de-

mand it; that true economy is not opposed to it. I shall be happy to co-operate with Congress in effecting it.

I have no hesitation in saying that there are many offiresigning from time to time because the path of promo-tion is "blocked up" by the incompetent, and the future seems to them so unpromising. But it is my pleasure as well as my duty to say that the corps is still full of chivalrous and gallant officers, who are not only ready for the post of danger, but would sustain the proud reputation of our navy, which has won so many laurels for our country, and by its brilliant victories cheered the heart of many a desponding patriot.

I will not, however, enlarge this report by repeating the views or reciting the various amendments and modifications of existing laws suggested in my last annual report, but content myself with renewing the recommen-

DISCIPLINE OF SEAMEN AND THE ENLISTMENT OF BOYS AS APPRENTICES.

While the just and liberal action of Congress during the last session, authorizing an increase of pay of seamen corresponding to the compensation in the merchant service, has done much to encourage enlistments, and was received with grateful joy by many a veteran tar, much remains yet to be accomplished to give proper shape, vigor, character, and success to the system of discipline in this important, indeed vital part of the public service. Language cannot describe, the mind can scarcely grass how much of happiness and wretchedness hang around the fidelity, the discipline of the neglected sailor. Pro perty, life, victory, defeat, national honor and renown ave much to do with the character and cheerful obedience and home-love of seamen.

I am very far from recommending the restoration

ounishment by flogging. In my opinion the experience of the navy, at least, justifies its abrogation. The sloopof war Saratoga, Commander Walker, constituting a of the squadron to Japan, left the United States in 1850, and returned in the same month of the present year, after cruising for four years beneath tropical suns and amid uncongenial people, thousands of miles from home. The term of the crew's enlistment expired while they were far in the east. They were informed while abroad that punishment by flogging was abolished. I allude to this case especially, as I think the test was a severe one. Yet, on their arrival at Boston, the most flattering reports reach me of the good conduct and discipline of the crew. I deemed it proper also to address an inquiry on the subject to Commander He responds thus: "In regard to the first question, whether it is desirable to restore corporal punishment, I reply that, from experience as well as conviction, I do not believe it would be desirable or for the interest of the service." And yet he and every officer concur in the necessity of prescribing and legalizing some substitute, ac-companied, however, with a plan of reward as well as punishment—punishment prompt, sure, in order to re-strain the offender and deter the inconsiderate; reward, equally sure and generous, to encourage fidelity and pro-mote respectability. It is not the severity but the cer-tainty and promptness of punishment which promotes discipline. The sailor who now commits an offence aboard ship, remote from home and the flag-ship, knows that he cannot be tried, possibly for months, until the vessel arrives in port or falls in with the Commodore of the squadron. I consider it all-important that the commander of any vessel should be authorized by law to order a summary court-martial for the trial of the petty officers and those below them; that they should have the power to punish by dishonorable discharge in any port, by confiner by dishonorable discharge in any port, by contached to reduced rations and without pay, with extra labor and denial of shore privilege. When the seaman knows that these punishments can be promptly inflicted by the officers in command of the ship he has much to deter him from disobedience.

But, in order successfully to invite diligent and entermediate in the state of the ship integrity will be

prising men, they must know that their integrity will be commended and their faithfulness remembered. An hor commended and their faithfulness remembered. An honorable discharge, leave-of-absence pay and shore-privilege, and the confidence of the officers will animate and encourage them. I hope I may be excused for repeating that "I deem it indispensable that some plan be adopted by which our seamen shall become more distinctly and permanently a part of the navy, and attached to the service. Whenever a ship-of-war now returns from her three years' cruise the officers are detached and granted a leave of absence for three months, with leave-of-absence pay, but the seamen are personnotive discharged—disconnected from the act of Congress directing the construction of six steam-frigates, I decided, after mature consideration and inquiry, to have them built in the navy yards, under the

It is my design also immediately to adopt, in a modified form, the "Apprentice System," and encourage the enflishment of American boys from fourteen until they are twenty-one years of age. The object in view will be to train them up at first on our large receiving ships, and transfer a certain number to each vessel starting on a cruise; to make them practical seamen; to teach them in their youth to become familiar with all the duties of a signed shall be of different and heavier calibre than here sailor, the requirements of the service, the sacredness of tofore used.

The Marine Corps constitutes a most interesting, im-portant, and useful portion of the naval force. Their service is equally effective on land and on sea. They are an armed and disciplined police on ship-board. Well trained and drilled before being detailed for duty at sea, aware of the fact that they are set apart to sustain the officers in command in the preservation of order and the suppression of mutiny, the first symptom of insubordination finds them ready, with strong hand and burnished arms, at the drum-tap, to put down disorder or disobedience. Recent occurrences at sea, painfully fresh in the months. Before adopting any of the plans proposed, I thought proper, in consideration of the greater experience of England and France in the application of steam machinery to men-of-war, to order the content of the steam of the steam machinery to men-of-war, to order the content of the steam of the stea der are so often unnecessarily fruitful of desolation and death. But on land also their services have ever been found efficient, either in the navy yards or on shore far from their country. This corps accompany our men-of-war in all their cruises in times of peace and war, and have and arrived at Abiquin the next day towards evening, signalized their valor in many a field. Their number now is entirely too small, and I carnestly recommend an increase, by which more time would be allowed for their proper discipline and drilling before they are ordered to sea, and their efficiency rendered still more reliable. I am satisfied also that the corps could be improved and elevated in character by adopting some system of an application.

> YARDS AND DOCKS. [Our limited space compels us to defer the publication this portion of the honorable Secretary's report. We learn from it that the Government possesses eight navy yards, including the one now in rapid progress of con-struction at Mare Island, California. To keep these yards in proper condition for useful service, and to erect on them the necessary buildings and fixtures, occasion the expenditure annually of large sums of money, not-withstanding the diligence and vigilance of the De-partment. Large appropriations will be from time to time required for the yard in California, which, it is pre-sumed, will be a complete establishment, as it is the only return ne on the Pacific. The Secretary enters into a full explanation of his proceedings under the act of March Sd 853, authorizing, pursuant to a recommendation of his immediate predecessor, (Hon. John P. Kennedy,) the con-struction of a basin and railway in connexion with the floating dock in California. The dock is completed, and the contractors are actively engaged in constructing the basin and railway. The balance dock, basin, and railway at Pensacola have not yet been accepted by the Government. The first test of their efficiency having been unsatisfactory, another test is to be made. The ground and appurtenances which formed the navy yard at Memphis have been unconditionally surrendered to the mayor of that city and abandoned by the Government.]

MISCELLANEOUS. The Naval Academy has, during the past year, contised to present to the country practical evidence of the wisdom and foresight of its projector. Under the vigi-lant superintendence of Commander Goldsborough and his worthy assistants the strictest discipline has been en-forced, to the marked benefit of this institution.

The plan of education is now thorough and the training of the youth admirable. The cruise in the practice ship is of immeasurable advantage in imparting at an early age practical knowledge of seamanship. During the last The following officers came in company: Major Morris, summer the Preble, with thirty-one young midshipmen, Capt. Stanton, and Lieuts. Carlisle, Trevitt, and Wilkins. visited Portsmouth and Plymouth, in England, and Brest and Cherbourg, in France, thereby affording them an op- Abadie, of the same post, were in town, but have returnportunity of examining the naval establishments at those points. The contract has been made for the crection of a machine-shop at Annapolis under the act of Congress authorizing it, and I shall avail myself of the first opportunity, when the service will permit, to substitute a from Fort Defiance, en route for the United States, Satsteamer for the sloop now used as a practice ship. The number of students now at the Academy is one hundred and sixty. Attention is called to the report of the Chief Union, arrived the 24th October, on their way to Fort of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography, and the Fillmers. Lieut. McFerran came in company and left annual report of the Board of Examiners, as also that of the commander of the practice ship.

The Naval Observatory is still entitled to a generous support, and eminently demonstrates the utility of its original establishment. The achievements on sea, quietly and gradually effected by Lieut. Maury, although not attracting the admiration of the multitude nor dazzling cers now in the navy whose names do not adorn the Re- the beholder with sudden flashes of triumph, have reflecthave promoted commerce, by pointing out to the mariner new paths on the great deep, where favorable winds and currents lend friendly aid. His "Wind and Current Charts" and "Sailing Directions" are saving millions of money by shortening the voyages of merchant vessels freighted with treasures. I am officially informed "that it was stated in a paper read before the British Associait was stated in a paper read before the British Association last year that it was estimated in India that a set of wind and current charts for the Indian ocean, like nose that have been constructed at this office for the Atlantic ocean, would produce an annual saving to British commerce in those seas alone of notless than \$1,000,000, (£250,000,) and for British commerce in all seas of \$10,000,000 a year. This estimate was based on the condition of shortening the voyage only one-tenth, (whereas the average length of the passage to all places eyond the equator has been shortened much more ;) and the estimate was again repeated at the last meeting of the Association at Liverpool." It has also been estimated that the value of these charts to the commerce and navigation of the United States is equivalent in the saving of time to several millions a year. I trust that these considerations may prevent all objection to the comparaively small expense annually called for to sustain this

stablishment. The Department is advised that Mr. Robert L. Stevens f New York, is now rapidly progressing in the construc-ion of the iron war steamer, to be shot and shell proof, for harbor defence, in accordance with his contract, under the acts of Congress of 1842 and 1852. In his communication of the 28th of October he informs me that the boilers will be ready to be put on board in about three weeks, and the shafts, beams, cranks, and links are near-y finished and turned," and that he has nearly five hundred men engaged on the work. It is very desirable that this vessel should be completed, large sums having already been expended by Congress upon it. If the undercarriages and left, with the determination to cross into dy been expended by Congress upon it. If the under-

likely to be obtained. The instructions for its inspection and receipt offer every inducement to encourage its prearation. The supply of hemp has been principally drawn rom Russia, and the present state of affairs in Europe monstrates the importance of our not being dependant on other countries for our supplies of this necessary

The estimates for the support of the navy and marine corps for the year ending June 30, 1856, and for all objects com ing under the control of this Depart ment, are, in the aggregate\$16,241,931 58 From which deduct special objects, includ-

ing transportation of the mail in steam

Leaves for the support of the navy and marine corps he estimate for the present fiscal year for the support of the navy and marine corps was ..

The total amount drawn from the Treatotal amount drawn from the 1rea-sury during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1854, as exhibited by the state-ment of appropriations for the naval service prepared by the Second Comp-troller of the Treasury, was rom which deduct repayments

Gives as the total expenditure for all objects under the control of the Navy De-10.801.845 28 partment..... ut of this amount there was expended 3.910.012 29 for special objects the sum of.

caving as the legitimate expenditures for the support of the navy and marine corps for the fiscal year ending June

There are, however, outstanding claims to be paid out f the appropriation for the fiscal year 1853-'54. Your attention is invited to the reports and estimates

\$6,891,832 99

In addition to the above enumerated vessels there are on the Pacific coast the stationary store-ships Fredonia, Lieut. J. D. Johnston, at Valparaiso, and Warren, Lieut. D. McDougall, at the navy yard at Mare Island, California.

The St. Lawrence has been cruising most of the year.

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now allowed to the others. You will perceive, from reference to the report of the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography, the importance of the action of Congress in making necessary appropriations for ordnance, which will be much larger than usual, in order to enable the Department to supply the six new steam-frigates with armament, which it is de-

tofore used.

In pursuance of the suggestions of the Chief of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, the naval laboratory in connexion with the Hospital at Brooklyn was reorganized in the fall of 1853 and placed on a basis to secure its success and enlarge its benefits to the service. Since January last the entire supply of medicines for the navy has been prepared at that laboratory, thereby giving assurance that a reliable article is supplied, and that the service will not suffer from the imposition of spurious and deleterious drugs. As a matter of economy also the and deleterious drugs. As a matter of economy also the advantages will not be inconsiderable.

The letters of Commander Charles H. Davis, touching

the Nautical Almanac, and of Professor Alexander in regard to the character of alimentary substances, accompany this report, and will explain the progress made in their departments.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your obe-ient servant.

J. C. DOBBIN. dient servant,

FROM NEW MEXICO.

The last mail from Santa Fe brings several interesting items of intelligence. Governor MERIWE-THER has had a "talk" with the Utahs.

"He left Santa Fe on Tuesday, the 17th of October elevated in character by adopting some system of ap-pointing officers of military education and training. was held between the chiefs and the Governor, after which presents were distributed among those present. The presents were distributed among those present. The conference was productive of much good feeling; the Indians returning to their country well satisfied, and gave assurance of remaining at peace with our people."

> There had been a disturbance between the Utahs and the whites, a Mexican in Taos county killing one of the former. The Utahs, in return, stole a number of animals from the inhabitants, which they returned on the Governor's having the Mexican arrested and placed in custody. This pleased the Indians, and they promised to remain at

> "Capt. Ewell, with his company of sixty dragoons, returned to town Saturday evening, the 14th, from a scout among the mountains between Santa Fe and Taos. He was sent out by Gen. Garland, on the representation of Mr. Albino Chacon, who had had some animals run off by the Apaches. He accompanied Capt. Ewell to the place where the Indians had been encamped, who had left some time previously. In the scout the troops ascended to the top of the Jacarilla mountain, one of the highest peaks in this part of the territory.
> "Lieut. Sturges, with his company of dragoons, arriv-

> ed in Santa Fe on Sunday, the 15th, from Fort Fillmore, and for the present he will remain at headquarters. In company with Licut. Sturges's command came Major Fry, paymaster United States army, who had been in the southern section of the Territory nearly two months, pay-

> ing the troops.
>
> "Dr. Sutherland, assistant surgeon United States army, ordered to report at headquarters, and Lieut. Mc-Cook and Walker on leave. Assistant Surgeon Langworthy left for the United States on Thursday, the 12th

"A detachment of one hundred United States recruits arrived in Santa Fe the 23d October from Fort Leaven-worth, under the command of Major Grier. He had in charge about fifty horses for the artillery at Fort Defiance Capt. Bowen, commissary at Albuquerque, and Surgeon ed home.

"A company of dragoons, under Capt. Ewell, arrived urday, the 7th instant. Capt. Sykes and lady and Miss McCrea, from Fort

the next day for Fort Fillmore, where he is stationed."

The news from the Messilla Valley states that the Indians there have acknowledged the jurisdiction of the United States, and claim protection. They have surrendered two or three fugitives.

ANOTHER FATAL DUEL IN CALIFORNIA.

Again does it fall to our lot to chronicle one of those unhappy events too frequent in this State, which has cast a dark shadow over one hearth at least and left one

heart desolate.

The principles in this duel were Achilles Kewen and en and the colonel were, with several others, in the saloon known as the "Blue Wing," Montgomery street.
The conversation was principally on the politics of the
day, and became rather animated. The colonel remarked to Kewen that he was a d-d "Know-Nothing;" upon which Kewen struck him on the mouth with his hand. Friends interfered and arrested further proceedings at that time. It is said that on Monday Mr. Kewen sought out Col. Woodlief and offered an apology, which was re-fused. The offer was again renewed, Kewen stating that he would make the apology in writing if it would be more acceptable. The colonel in the mean time had sent a challenge, and he expressed his determination to have it settled in the usual manner. Friends were accordingly chosen, and it was concluded to cross the bay and adjust the difficulty by recourse to fire-arms.

Yesterday morning the parties left in the Oakland ferry-boat at 7 o'clock in the morning. Several persons in the city, having been informed of what was going on, crossed over in the ferry-boat. On arriving at Oakland the parties proceeded a short distance outside of the city limits. The friends of Mr. Kewen were Messrs. Wake Briarly and Robert Wood. Col. Woodlief's friends were Capt. Skerrett and Major McDonald. The arms chosen for the occasion were Mississippi yagers. The ground was being marked off when deputy sheriff Simons, who what he promises, the benefits derivable from it for har-bor defence are incalculable.

Great difficulty having been experienced in procuring
American water-rotted hemp, special agents have been
appointed in the districts of country in which it was most
likely to be obtained. The instructions for its inspection

and receive offer. On the ridge of the bill they halted; the ground was marked off forty paces, the principals took their places, and on the word "fire" being given both wheeled and fired, the ball from Mr. Kewen's rifle passing completely through the heart of Col. Woodlief and out at his back, killing him instantly. This disastrous affair took place about one o'clock. The body of the colonel was brought over to the city in the ferry-boat last evening. The scene, when the wife of the dead man looked upon all that remained of the former partner of her joys and sorrows, who, but a few short hours before, had gone forth in the strength and prime of manhood, is said by those who were present to have been affecting in the extreme.

Mrs. Woodlief accompanied her husband on the occasion, and stopped in San Antonio while the party went

out. She returned with the body to the Tehama House. DEVEREUX J. WOODLIEF was born in Greenville county, Virginia, and moved to Texas more than twenty year: Virginia, and moved to Texas more than twenty years ago. He was elected a colonel in the Texan army, and was in active service during the revolution there. Subsequently he was one of the Texas Rangers. During the Mexican war he accompanied the American forces as an amateur warrior, and was distinguished for the independent method in which he took his positions during the battles and the accuracy of his marksmanship. He had been engaged in a number of duels, had been wounded a number of times in battle, and carries to his grave three number of times in battle, and carries to his grave three bullets in his body. He came to California in 1849, and was collector of the foreign miners' tax in Calaveras county.

Much excitement exists in Rochester, New York, in consequence of the sudden disappearance, three weeks ago, of a respectable young woman of the name of EMMA MOORE. The opinion seems to be that she was forcibly carried away and murdered, but for what purpose is not known. Four public meetings of the citizens have been held for the purpose of devising means to clear up the mystery. On Wednesday some five hundred persons turned out and made a thorough search of the country in the vicinity, but without success. The affair creates great excitement. Much excitement exists in Rochester, New York, in

STEAMBOAT DISASTERS .- Two steamboats, the Pacific and the *Grand Tower*, with valuable cargoes, were lost on the Mississippi river a few days ago. The former was bound for New Orleans and the latter for St. Louis.